

Devotional and Selections

"BELIEVE AND REST."

"I have a life with Christ to live,
And, ere I live it, must I wait
Till learning can clear answer give
Of this and that book's date?

"I have a life in Christ to live;
I have a death in Christ to die;
And must I wait till science give
All doubts a full reply?

"Nay; rather, while the sea of doubt
Is raging wildly round about,
Questioning of life and death and sin,
Let me but creep within
Thy fold, O Christ, and at Thy feet
Take but the lowest seat;
And hear Thine awful voice repeat,
In gentlest accents heavenly sweet,
Come unto me and rest;
Relieve me and be blest."

—Shairn.

THE DISCIPLINE OF LIFE.

Sooner or later we find out that life is not a holiday, but a discipline. Earlier or later we all discover that the world is not a play-ground; it is quite clear God means it for a school. The moment we forget that, the puzzle of life begins. We try to play in school; the Master does not mind that so much for its own sake, for he likes to see his children happy, but in our playing we neglect our lessons. We do not see how much there is to learn, and we do not care, but our Master cares. He has a perfectly overpowering and inexplicable solicitude for our education; and because he loves us, he comes into the school sometimes, and speaks to us. He may speak very softly and gently, or very loudly. Sometimes a look is enough, and we understand it, like Peter, and go out at once, and weep bitterly. Sometimes the voice is like a thunderclap, startling a summer night. But one thing we may be sure of—the task he sets us to is never measured by our delinquency. The discipline may seem far less than our desert, or even to our eye ten times more. But it is not measured by these; it is measured by God's love; measured solely that the scholar may be better educated when he arrives at his Father. The discipline of life is a preparation for meeting the Father. When we arrive there to "behold his beauty" we must have the educated eye; and that must be trained here. We must become so pure in heart—and it needs much practice—that we shall "see God." That explains life—why God puts man in the crucible, and makes him pure by fire.—Henry Drummond.

THE BLESSING OF CHEERFULNESS.

God bless the cheerful person—man, woman or child, old or young, illiterate or educated, handsome or homely. What the sun is to nature, what God is to the stricken heart, are cheerful persons in the house and

by the wayside. They go unobtrusively, unconsciously, about their mission, happiness beaming from their faces. We love to sit near them. We love the nature of their eye, the tone of their voices. Little children find them out quickly amid the densest crowd and passing by the knitted brow and compressed lip, glide near, laying a confiding hand on their knee and lift their clear, young eyes to those loving faces.—A. A. Willits.

"KEEP CLOSE TO YOUR GUIDE."

It is said that when sight-seers visit the wonderful Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, the guides mount a sort of pulpit before entering its gloomy depths, and preach the tourists a sermon. This sermon consists of only five words, and yet its importance cannot be over-estimated. These words are: "Keep close to your guide." To fall back or depend upon oneself for even one instant while within this largest known cavern in the world, may mean death. Its pitfalls are deep and numerous. Only the guide knows where safety lies. Even beneath the power of the strongest illumination the darkness is so intense that but imperfectly are revealed its wonder and beauty, its fairy-like magic haunts, its myriads of scintillating stalactites. But side by side with every gleaming glory lurks also—death, sure and certain, unless accompanied by a safe guide. The Bottomless Pit, the Dead Sea, the Covered Way, the Solitary Cave, the Covered Pit, the Deserted Chambers, and the unknown depths of Echo River, are all ready to greedily claim victims from the hundreds of tourists who pass wonder-eyed and awe-stricken through the vast subterranean passages, chambers and halls.

Wherein lies their safeguard? Only in obeying faithfully the admonition of the five-word sermon: "Keep close to your guide."

Are we not tourists on a longer journey and through even more devious ways, daily passing marvelous wonders which have become commonplace to us only because of our familiarity with them? Even so we are encompassed about with dangers and pitfalls, and our safety lies in keeping close to our Guide. Worldliness, perhaps, may estrange us from our Guide more quickly than almost any other allurements. It is so beautiful; the ways of pleasure seem so inviting. Let us not be deceived. Cling close to the guide. Only in daily, hourly communion; only in earnest, worthy service; only in giving our best and trusting him for the rest, lies safety.—Epworth Era.

PRAYER.

Almighty God, we believe in Thy Son Jesus Christ our only Savior, infinite in power, and infinite in grace, Thine only Begotten Son, that dwelleth in the bosom of the Father. He became flesh, and dwelt among us; and He told us that if we pray unto Thee we shall receive answers great, tender, ample. We rest upon His word. We are sure that He who was the truth told us that which is true, and will not change His word, or add to it, or take away from it. We stand upon it, and watch and treasure it. Amen.